(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, Cellular Phones are already covered under the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) of World Trade Organization to which India is a Signatory. As such, Cellular Phones are IT Instruments.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Cellphone consumers in Karnataka

3595. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) how many BSNL cellphone prepaid and post paid customers are there in Karnataka and the reasons for stopping release of new connections; and

(b) Whether it is a fact that Sim Cards are in short supply which is expected from other countries for which Government have already issued order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) BSNL has provided 127357 Prepaid and 72848 Postpaid Cellular connections upto 31.3.2003, in the state of Karnataka and continues to provide the new connections.

(b) No, Sir.

Promotion of international gateways in N.E.R.

3596. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various international gateways for internet running in the country, in Government as well as non-Government Sectors, State-wise;